# BOROUGH OF CALNE.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health

for the Year Ending 31st December, 1944.

HEALTH
A - 6 NOV 1945
O.R.

The Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the
BOROUGH OF CALNE.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
LIBRARY

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

In the absence of your permanent Medical Officer, I have the honour to submit my second Annual Report.

This report is somewhat curtailed as compared with pre-war Reports but the facts show that the health of the community has been again maintained at a high level in spite of war-time conditions. It has been shown that health and morale can be maintained by plenty of work, good wages and adequate, if not luxurious, diet. The two great drawbacks to our social improvement remain, however, to some extent even in Calne, namely, bad housing and overcrowding.

The Town Council are alive to this fact and propose at the earliest possible moment to provide a considerable number of well-planned and well laid-out houses.

The question of the adequacy of the water supply has again claimed considerable attention and it is hoped that a satisfactory solution will be evolved at no long distant date.

## I. General Statistics and Social Conditions of the District.

| | |
|---|---|
| Area (in acres) | 1,276. |
| Population (1944) | 5,595. |
| Number of Inhabited Houses (end of 1944 according to Rate Book) | 1,525. |
| Rateable Value | £29,104. |
| Sum represented by penny rate | £116. 12. 5. |

## II. Vital Statistics for 1944.

| | Total. | M. | F. | Rate. | cf E. & W. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Live Births | | | | | |
| Legitimate | 109 | 65 | 44 | | |
| Illegitimate | 11 | 4 | 7 | | |
| Birth Rate (per 1000 population) | | | | 21.4 | (17.6) |
| Still Births | 2 | 0 | 2 | | |
| Rate (per 1000 total births) | | | | 16.4 | |
| Deaths | 65 | 31 | 34 | | |
| Death Rate (per 1000 population) | | | | 11.6 | (11.6) |
| Deaths from Puerperal Causes | | | | | |
| Puerperal Sepsis | 0 | | | | |
| Other puerperal causes | 1 | | | | |
| Death Rate of Infants under 1 year | | | | | |
| All Infants per 1000 live births | | | | 41.7 | (46) |
| Legitimate Infants per 1000 legitimate live births | | | | 27.5 | |
| Illegitimate Infants per 1000 illegitimate live births | | | | 181.8 | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Deaths from Cancer (all ages) | 10 |
| " " Measles (all ages) | 0 |
| " " Whooping Cough (all ages) | 0 |
| " " Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) | 0 |
| " " Influenza | 0 |
| " " Respiratory Diseases (21,22,23) | 5 |
| " " Diseases of the Heart and Blood Vessels (18,19,20) | 26 |

## PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

### Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the Year 1944.

| Disease | Total Cases Notified. | Cases admitted to Hospital. | Total Deaths. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Scarlet Fever | 10 | 7 | - |
| Diphtheria | 2 | 2 | - |
| Whooping Cough | 18 | - | - |
| Measles | 8 | - | - |
| Poliomyelitis | - | - | - |
| Enteric Fever | - | - | - |
| Pneumonia | 3 | - | - |
| Dysentery | - | - | - |
| Cerebro Spinal Meningitis | - | - | - |
| Erysipelas | 2 | - | - |
| Puerperal Pyrexia | - | - | - |
| Ophthalmia Neonatorum | - | - | - |
| Smallpox | - | - | - |

## TUBERCULOSIS.

### New Cases and Mortality.

| Age Periods | New Cases | | | | Deaths | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Respiratory | | Non-Respiratory | | Respiratory | | Non-Respirato | |
| | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| 0 | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| 25 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 35 | | | | | | | | |
| 45 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 55 | | | | | | | | |
| 65 | | | | | | | | |
| Totals | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |

## GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

### Maternity and Child Welfare

(i) Midwifery and Maternity Services.
There is one midwife in the area, who is working under the County Council scheme through the Calne Nursing Association, and a grant is received from the County Council in respect of this service.

(ii) Institutional Provisions for Mothers and Children.
None exists within the area.

(iii) Health Visitors and School Nurses.
Duties carried out by County Council Health Visitor.

(iv) The Child Welfare Clinic was introduced during last year. It is held at the Baptist Church Hall on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 2.0 p.m.

(v) Child Life Protection.
During the year the N.S.P.C.C. took successful action in one bad case of parental neglect.

Registered Maternity and other Nursing Homes within the Borough

None exist.

Nursery School

A War-time Day Nursery was opened during last year and has been running with considerable success. The children are all medically inspected every quarter.

Ambulance Facilities

(i) Infectious Cases. A motor ambulance is stationed at the Calne, Chippenham and Malmesbury Isolation Hospital at Chippenham, of which the Borough of Calne is a constituent authority.

(ii) For non-infectious and accident cases, a motor ambulance is provided by the local Nursing Association.

Nursing in the Home.

General Nursing. This is provided by the Calne Nursing Association and is in every way satisfactory.

British Restaurant

This restaurant caters chiefly for transport workers and school children who otherwise would not have the benefit of a cooked mid-day meal.

However, for some time the number of the general public patronising the Restaurant has progressively decreased; this will, doubtless, continue until the overhead charges, which cannot be reduced below a certain figure, are such that a definite financial loss will result. The position will then, no doubt, have to be reviewed.

Immunisation against Diphtheria

This service is provided by the County Council, visits being made to the Central School at frequent intervals during the year. The response to this service is extremely good, and, though separate figures are not available for the town, a satisfactory inference may be drawn from the fact that for the County as a whole some 95% of the total school population have been immunised.

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Rainfall.

The rainfall is recorded at the Sewage Disposal Works, the reading being taken at 9.0 a.m. every day; from this information the following table has been compiled :-

| Month. | Total Rainfall Inches. | Greatest fall in 24 hours. | | Number of days with 0.1 or more recorded. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| January | 1.57 | .34 | 22nd | 16 |
| February | .64 | .24 | 15th | 11 |
| March | .33 | .20 | 14th | 5 |
| April | 1.86 | .58 | 15th | 9 |
| May | .69 | .22 | 4th | 8 |
| June | 1.81 | .47 | 30th | 12 |
| July | 2.33 | .87 | 2nd | 13 |
| | 9.23 | | | 74 |

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016 with funding from
Wellcome Library

https://archive.org/details/b29087375

| Month. | Total Rainfall Inches. | Greatest fall in 24 hours. | Number of days with 0.1 or more recorded. |
|---|---|---|---|
| c/fwd. | 9.23 | | 74 |
| August | 3.02 | 1.04 22nd | 11 |
| September | 2.49 | .56 23rd & 24th | 12 |
| October | 4.33 | .78 17th | 20 |
| November | 5.32 | .86 16th | 22 |
| December | 1.74 | .71 16th | 11 |
| | 26.13 | | 150 |

In the previous year, with a total rainfall of 26.49 inches falling on 146 days, January was the wettest month (5.35 inches falling on 21 days) whilst April was the driest (0.70 inches falling in 7 days).

During 1944 there was an absolute drought between July 30th and August 17th. There were two dry spells the first between February 17th and March 13th, and the second between September 8th and 22nd.

The average rainfall for the five years 1939 - 43 inclusive was 31.42 inches.

Water Supply.

The water undertaking is in the hands of a small private company of limited resources and the question of adequately providing the district with a wholesome supply of water is constantly before the Town Council.

The Company's attention has been called again and again to the shortage of water, particularly on the Council's Housing Estates at North End.

It would seem that, apart from any improvements at the source which may be embarked upon (e.g. longer hours of pumping, especially at week-ends to keep the ridiculously small high level reservoir fully charged), the question of a larger (or duplicated) trunk main should be considered.

The Town Council view with considerable apprehension the situation which will undoubtedly arise when they are able to embark upon their post-war housing scheme.

I can only add the opinion, which I expressed in my Report last year, that it would be to the benefit of the local community if the Town Council purchased the water undertaking and modernised it.

The quality of the water, however, is satisfactory, samples of the treated (chlorinated) water being taken quarterly for bacteriological examination. The results in all cases shew absence of coliform organisms in 300 m.l.

No chemical examinations were made during the year but previous examinations were satisfactory.

The water is non plumbo-solvent and there has been no form of contamination. The percentage of dwelling-houses with a piped water supply is 99. There are no street stand pipes inuse. The water is obtained from the lower greensand springs at Calstone Wellington, about three miles to the south-east of the borough.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

Practically the whole of the developed portion of the Borough is sewered. Except for the houses beyond the reach of the sewers, owing to their isolated position, the percentage of houses connected is 97.7.

The Sewage Disposal Works, situated in the Rural District of Calne and Chippenham about 1½ miles to the north-west of the town, continues to function satisfactorily.

The effluent, which discharges into the River Marden just below Hazeland Mill, and about one mile below the sewage works, is up to the required standard. A sample of effluent submitted for analysis on the 3rd May proved to be one of the best ever taken. The analyst's report was as follows :-

"Suspended solids 2.9 parts per 100,000
B.O.D. (5 days) 0.84 do.
The sample, therefore, represents a good quality effluent.".

No cases of river pollution have been reported during the year.

Public Cleansing.

House refuse is collected weekly from every house, the Contractors emptying the receptacles from the kerbside where they are placed ready by the householder. The Contractor also provides the tip, which is in the adjoining Rural District, about 1½ miles from the town in a north-easterly direction. The refuse is dealt with by the Contractor on the 'Bradford' system.

Salvage.

The weight of salvage collected during the year amounted to 159 tons 5½ cwt. valued at £571. 10. 2. compared with 373½ tons valued at £743. 5. 6. during the previous year.

The collection of Kitchen Waste commenced at the end of January. There are 50 communal bins placed at strategic points in the Borough. The weight collected totalled 53 tons 7 cwts. valued at £80. 0. 6. (these figures are included in the above total). The waste is sold in a raw state to National By-Products Ltd., and dry-rendered in a solvent extraction plant at Messrs. C. & T. Harris' By-Products Factory at Wenhill, Calne, and sold by them to local farmers as a "black-pudding".

Meat and Other Foods.

During the year 708 tins and jars of foodstuff were condemned as unfit for human consumption, also 2 cwt. of seed potatoes, 2 qr.27 lb. of fish, 14½ lb. of cheese, two carcases of sheep weighing 116 lb., 110 lb. of beef and 54 eggs.

No case of food poisoning has been reported.

The County Council are the responsible authority under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

Milk Supply.

There is one producer of "Accredited" milk in the district; One retailer is licensed to sell "Tuberculin Tested" and "Accredited" milk; one to sell "Tuberculin Tested" milk; one to sell "Accredited"milk bottled on the premises; and one retailer is licensed to sell "Pasteurised" milk produced in a neighbouring district.

Milk is supplied daily, during sessions, to the Secondary School, Senior, Junior and Infants Schools in the town.

The trade is carried on satisfactorily by all concerned.

Infestation Order, 1943.

A rodent operative was appointed during the year to act jointly between the Borough of Calne and the adjoining Calne and Chippenham Rural District in the proportion of 20% to 80%.

The district has been surveyed and all complaints investigated. Pre-baiting and poison-baiting have now been carried out where necessary with the result that the district is now remarkably free from rats.

Housing.

There is still a great need for further houses in spite of the Town Council's activities in the years between the two wars. They have erected 289 houses out of a total of 1525 dwelling-houses of all classes in the Borough besides subsidising 73 under the various Housing Acts and lending money in 15 other cases under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Acts.

It will be seen that the local authority have either built or are or have been financially interested in no less than 25% of all the dwelling-houses in the Borough. Nevertheless at the outbreak of the present war the Town Council were negotiating for a further site of some 12 acres and it is hoped that this will be fully developed as soon as the Government can grant facilities for building after hostilities cease.

Sanitary Inspection.

It has been impossible to carry out routine inspections during the year, as in ordinary times, but as complaints have arisen they have all been dealt with satisfactorily.

With only one or two exceptions, which are well known to us, the houses in the town are kept in very fair condition both by the landlords and the tenants.

The cases to which I refer are kept constantly under review, and where there are small children I have the co-operation of the County Council Health Visitor as well.

Public Health Officers.

a. Medical Officer of Health.
b. Sanitary Inspector, who is also Borough Surveyor.
c. One whole-time Veterinary Inspector at the Bacon Factory. of Messrs. C. & T. Harris (Calne) Ltd.
d. County Council Health Visitor whose district extends into the adjoining Rural District.

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient Servant,

(sgd) R.D. Gray.

Medical Officer of Health.